

Message Text

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PAGE 01 HONG K 07705 010950Z

10

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15

AID-20 COME-00 EB-11 FRB-02 TRSE-00 XMB-07 OPIC-12

CIEP-02 LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01 AGR-20 RSR-01 /166 W

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R 010827Z AUG 73

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7765

INFO USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 7705

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PINT, CH

SUBJ: CENTRAL DOCUMENT ON AGRICULTURE, RELATED ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

1. A RECENT BORDER CROSSER HAS GIVEN THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNT OF
A CENTRAL GOVERNMENT DOCUMENT PURPORTEDLY READ OUT IN CANTON IN
ABOUT APRIL THIS YEAR (OIR 1968/73):
BEGIN QUOTE.

2. POPULATION IN THE CITIES. THE DOCUMENT EXPLAINED THAT FOR
THE PAST FEW YEARS CITIES AND TOWNS IN CHINA HAD BEEN OVER-
POPULATED; THIS WAS DUE TO THE RAPID GROWTH OF THE POPULATION
GENERALLY, THE ILLEGAL MIGRATION OF FARMWORKERS FROM THE COUNTRY-
SIDE, AND DCY'S ABSENTING THEMSELVES FROM THE FIELDS AND ILLEGALLY
RETURNING TO THE TOWNS. THUS FARMS, FIELDS AND PLANTATIONS WERE
EITHER BEING ABANDONED OR WERE SUFFERING FROM AN ACUTE LABOR
SHORTAGE; THIS WAS HINDERING THE PROGRESS OF THE COUNTRY AND
AFFECTING THE NATIONAL INCOME. WITH EFFECT FROM THE PUBLICATION
OF THE DOCUMENT (IN LATE MAR 73), ALL PUBLIC SECURITY BUREAUX,
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PAGE 02 HONG K 07705 010950Z

PROTECTIVE SECTIONS, RESIDENTS' COMMITTEES, COMMUNE AND PRODUCTION

TEAM LEADERS AND MILITIA MEMBERS WERE TO CARRY OUT CHECKS TO ENSURE THAT ALL LOCAL RESIDENTS WERE LEGALLY PERMITTED TO RESIDE THERE. DETAILED REPORTS WERE TO BE MADE TO THEIR PLACES OF ORIGIN OF PERSONS ILLEGALLY ABSENTING THEMSELVES, IN ORDER THAT THEY MIGHT BE APPREHENDED. FACTORIES, TRANSPORTATION CORPORATIONS, CONSTRUCTION SITES AND SHIPYARDS WERE WARNED NOT TO EMPLOY ILLEGAL RESIDENTS. DCY WERE WARNED TO SETTLE DOWN PERMANENTLY IN THE PLACES TO WHICH THEY HAD BEEN ASSIGNED. APPLICATIONS TO RETURN TO THE CITIES AND TOWNS WOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED, AND WOULD BE TREATED AS A BREACH OF SOCIAL ORDER.

3. RATIONS. WORKERS WERE ADVISED TO CONSUME NON-STAPLE FOODS, SUCH AS SWEET POTATOES, IN LIEU OF RICE IN ORDER TO CONSERVE RICE AGAINST POSSIBLE FUTURE FAMINE; THE RATE OF EXCHANGE WAS ONE CATTY OF RICE FOR 7 CATTIES OF SWEET POTATOES. THEY WERE ALSO ADVISED TO SURRENDER THE SURPLUS RICE COUPONS TO THE AUTHORITIES CONCERNED.

4. MIDDLE SCHOOL GRADUATES IN FACTORIES. JUNIOR AND SENIOR MIDDLE SCHOOL GRADUATES COULD NO LONGER BE ABSORBED INTO FACTORIES, AS INDUSTRIAL WAGES HAD ALREADY EXCEEDED THE LIMIT LAID DOWN BY THE STATE COUNCIL; THEY WERE THEREFORE TO BE SENT DOWN-TO-THE-COUNTRYSIDE. END QUOTE.

5. COMMENT. AN UPSURGE IN YOUTH TO THE COUNTRYSIDE, A FREEZE ON FACTORY JOBS, EFFORTS TO REALLOCATE LABOR AND OTHER RESOURCES TO AGRICULTURE, AND CONCERN FOR SAVING GRAIN HAVE BEEN INDICATED IN OTHER SOURCES AND REPORTED EARLIER. IT IS LIKELY THAT THESE MEASURES HAVE BEEN EXPLAINED TO THE PUBLIC AS THE SOURCE REPORTS, ALTHOUGH IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO JUDGE THE ACCURACY OF HIS ACCOUNT.
DEAN

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